



UNITED STATES INTERAGENCY
COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS

Achieving an End to Chronic Homelessness

Strategies for Optimization

1) Determine Local Need for Additional Permanent Supportive Housing

Determine the specific combination of strategies that are needed to ensure sufficient local availability of permanent supportive housing units to prevent and end chronic homelessness. Some communities with a large supply of permanent supportive housing can make significant progress towards the goal just by improving the targeting of existing units. Most communities will also need to create new supportive housing through both targeted grants and mainstream resources. USICH's [Supportive Housing Opportunities Planner \(SHOP\) Tool](#) can help communities determine the strategies for increasing supportive housing availability.

2) Prioritize Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness in Permanent Supportive Housing

Adopt HUD's recommended orders of priority as outlined in their [Notice on Prioritizing Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness and Other Vulnerable Homeless Persons in Permanent Supportive Housing](#) into the CoC's written standards, and prioritize households in that manner. HUD encourages CoCs to ensure that people experiencing chronic homelessness are prioritized for admission in at least 85 percent of turnover units in all non-dedicated permanent supportive housing.

3) Leverage Medicaid and Behavioral Health Funding to Pay for Services in Permanent Supportive Housing

All providers within the community leverage Medicaid or behavioral health funding for CoC-funded supportive housing services in order to free up CoC funding for additional units (through the grant amendment process). HHS's [Primer on Using Medicaid for People Experiencing Chronic Homelessness and Tenants in Permanent Supportive Housing](#) and their [Information Bulletin on Coverage of Housing-Related Activities and Services for Individuals with Disabilities](#) both include information on how states can use Medicaid to support services critical for people experiencing chronic homelessness or living in permanent supportive housing. Providers in the community can demonstrate that they are leveraging Medicaid-financed supportive services, or other healthcare or behavioral healthcare funding, to help program participants achieve housing stability. This could be evidenced either by the providers receipt of payments directly from Medicaid for services provided to program participants or through formal partnerships with providers who are qualified and able to claim and receive Medicaid payments for services.

4) Monitor Program Performance and Reallocate Under-performing Projects

The CoC monitors performance and cost effectiveness closely and reallocates funds from all under-performing or less cost effective programs and has no additional projects from which to reallocate funds. Reallocating funds is one of the most important tools by which CoCs can make strategic improvements to their homelessness system. Through reallocation, CoCs can create new, evidence-informed projects by eliminating projects that are underperforming or are more appropriately funded from other sources. USICH's [Creating Effective Systems to End Homelessness: A Guide to Reallocating Funds in the CoC Program](#) provides CoCs and recipients of CoC funds with information on reallocation and strategies for undertaking reallocation through the annual CoC program competition.

5) Partner with Public Housing Agencies

The CoC partners with one or more Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) to do one of the following: obtain a limited preference (or "set-aside") of Housing Choice Vouchers and Project-Based Vouchers (that are linked to supportive services) specifically for persons experiencing chronic homelessness, which allows recipients of non-dedicated permanent supportive housing to prioritize people experiencing chronic homelessness in more units; PHAs, in coordination with the CoC, develop new permanent supportive housing through project-based Housing Choice Vouchers and/or by developing new permanent supportive housing buildings; and/or increase opportunities for tenants of supportive housing (who were not experiencing chronic homelessness upon admission) to "move up" through Housing Choice Vouchers and other affordable housing and employment services, which frees up supportive housing for people who are experiencing chronic homelessness. USICH's [PHA Guidebook to Ending Homelessness](#) provides guidance and best practices that PHAs can use to strengthen their collaborative efforts. HUD also provides several [resources to support partnerships between CoCs and PHAs](#) around homelessness, including a [quick guide for CoCs on how to engage PHAs](#).